



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of Wisconsin*

517 East Wisconsin Avenue

Milwaukee, WI 53202

PRESS RELEASE

March 22, 2011

**Wisconsin Man Charged With Sexual
Exploitation of Minor in Belize**

WASHINGTON - Today a grand jury sitting in the Eastern District of Wisconsin returned a one count indictment against U.S. citizen Roland Flath (age: 71) of Wisconsin for traveling in foreign commerce and engaging in and attempting to engage in illicit sexual conduct with a minor less than 18 years of age, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney James L. Santelle of the Eastern District of Wisconsin, John Morton, Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security Eric J. Bowsell.

According to court documents, Flath, allegedly traveled to Belize in July 2006 and subsequently sexually molested a minor girl from Belize. Flath was originally charged by a criminal complaint filed in the Eastern District of Wisconsin in October 2010. He was arrested by the Guatemalan National Civil Police on Feb. 20, 2011, and expelled back to the United States and arrested by ICE Agents and the U.S. Marshal Service.

Flath faces a maximum penalty of up to 30 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. Charges against Flath for aggravated assault of a minor are also pending in Belize.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

United States Attorney James L. Santelle stated: "The identification, apprehension, and prosecution of people who victimize the most vulnerable among us—our children—has been and continues to be among the top priorities of the United States Attorney's Office and of all of our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners. Today's indictment, charging international travel for the purpose of sexual exploitation of a minor, underscores our commitment to the safety and security of all of our citizens—in Eastern Wisconsin and beyond—under the umbrella of our highly effective and focused Project Safe Childhood initiative. I commend the United States Departments of Homeland Security and State for joining with the Justice Department, including the Criminal Division, in our collaborative work on in this important case."

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Penelope Coblentz of the Eastern District of Wisconsin and Trial Attorney Mi Yung Park of CEOS. This case is a result of investigative efforts led by ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in Milwaukee and the U.S. State Department's Diplomatic Security Service in Belize, with the assistance of the U.S. State Department's Diplomatic Security Service in Guatemala, ICE HSI's Attache Office in Guatemala, the U.S. Marshal Service, and the Belize Police Department.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

#

For additional information contact:

Assistant United States Attorney Penelope Coblentz (414) 297-1700
Public Information Officer Dean Puschnig